



US009238523B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Frost

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,238,523 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Jan. 19, 2016**

- (54) **BOX CONTAINER AND DISPLAY**
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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

- (21) Appl. No.: **13/955,925**
- (22) Filed: **Jul. 31, 2013**

Related U.S. Application Data

- (60) Provisional application No. 61/677,979, filed on Jul. 31, 2012.

- (51) **Int. Cl.**
B65D 5/32 (2006.01)
B65D 5/50 (2006.01)
B65D 5/44 (2006.01)

- (52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **B65D 5/324** (2013.01); **B65D 5/445** (2013.01); **B65D 5/505** (2013.01); **B65D 5/5023** (2013.01)

- (58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC B65D 5/324; B65D 5/445; B65D 5/5023; B65D 5/505
USPC 229/122.21, 122.24, 122.26, 122.32, 229/125.19, 125.27, 125.28, 164, 199; 206/736, 774
See application file for complete search history.

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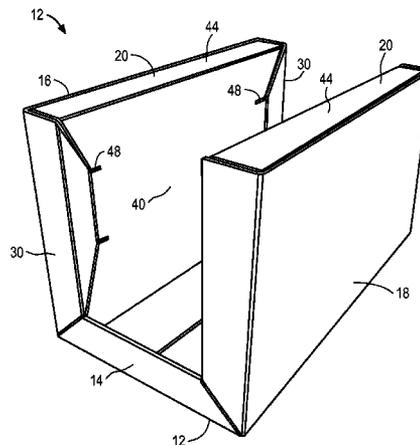
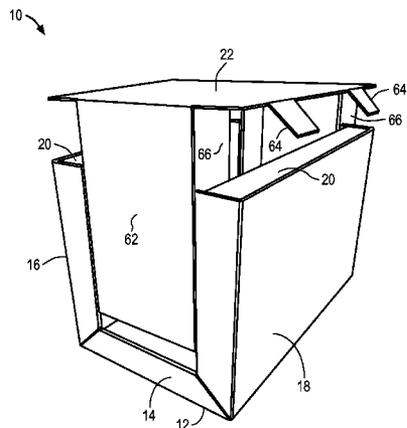
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A corrugated box container with a main component including a base section and first and second side sections. The box container additionally includes first and second side support components associated with the first and second side sections for reinforcing the first and second side support sections. The box container further includes a cover component that is capable of engagement with the main component or the first and second side support components, such that the main component and the cover component present a fully enclosed space within the box container. The box container is erected from a knockdown configuration by folding the first and second side sections until the side sections are generally perpendicular with the base section; connecting the first and second side support components with the first and second side sections respectively; and connecting the cover component with the main component or the first and second side support components.

16 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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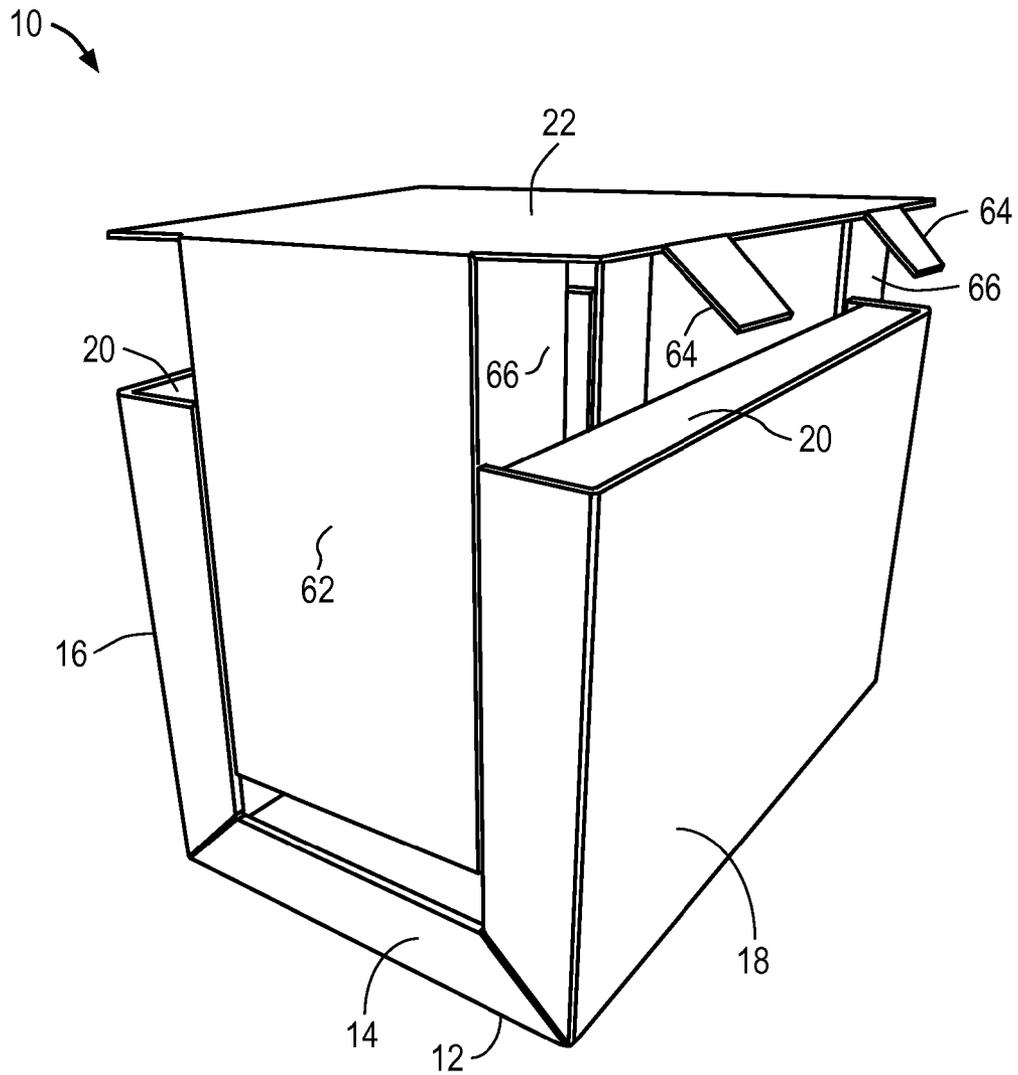


FIG. 1

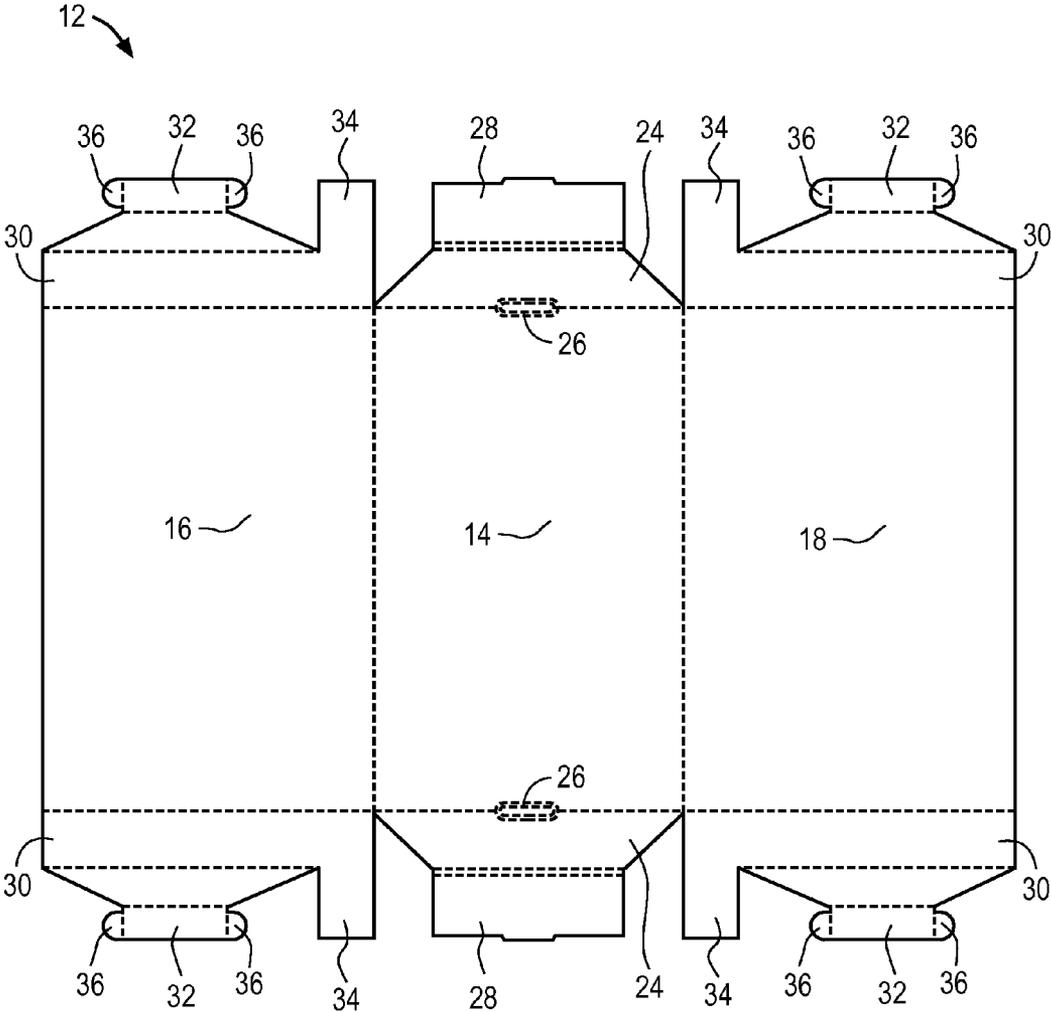


FIG. 2

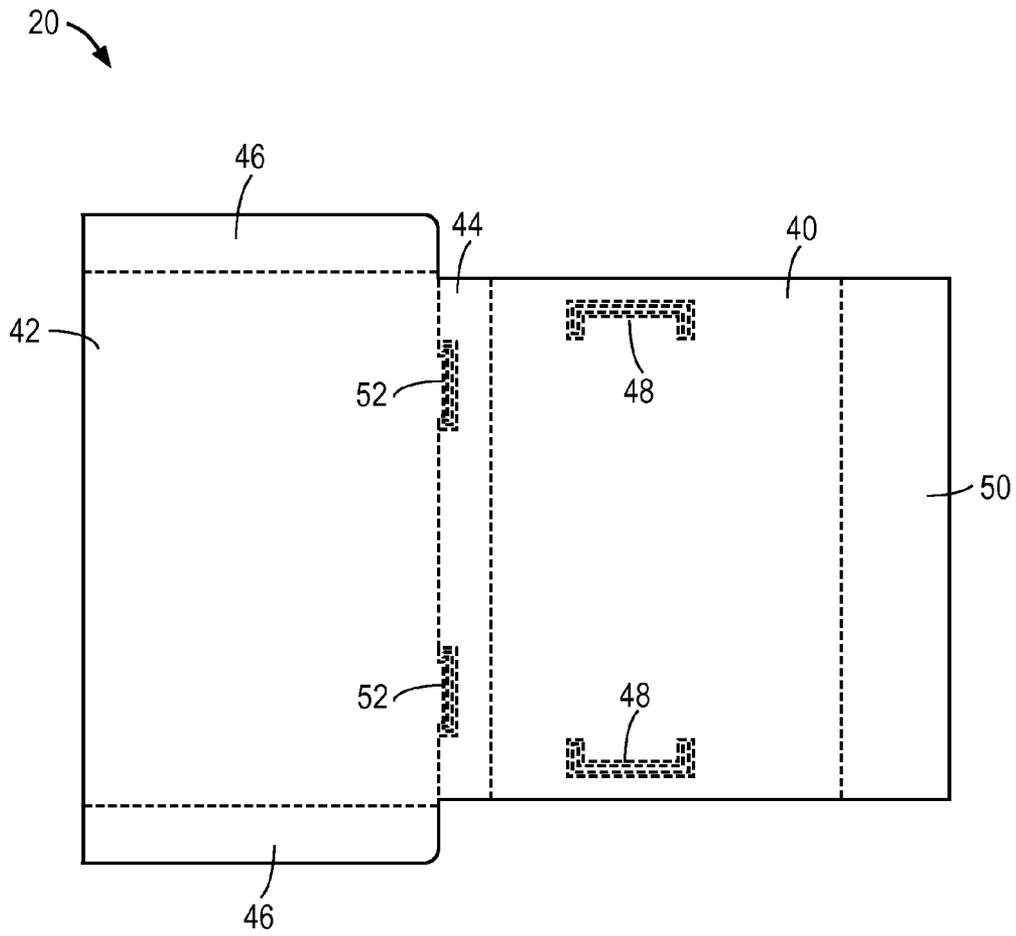


FIG. 3

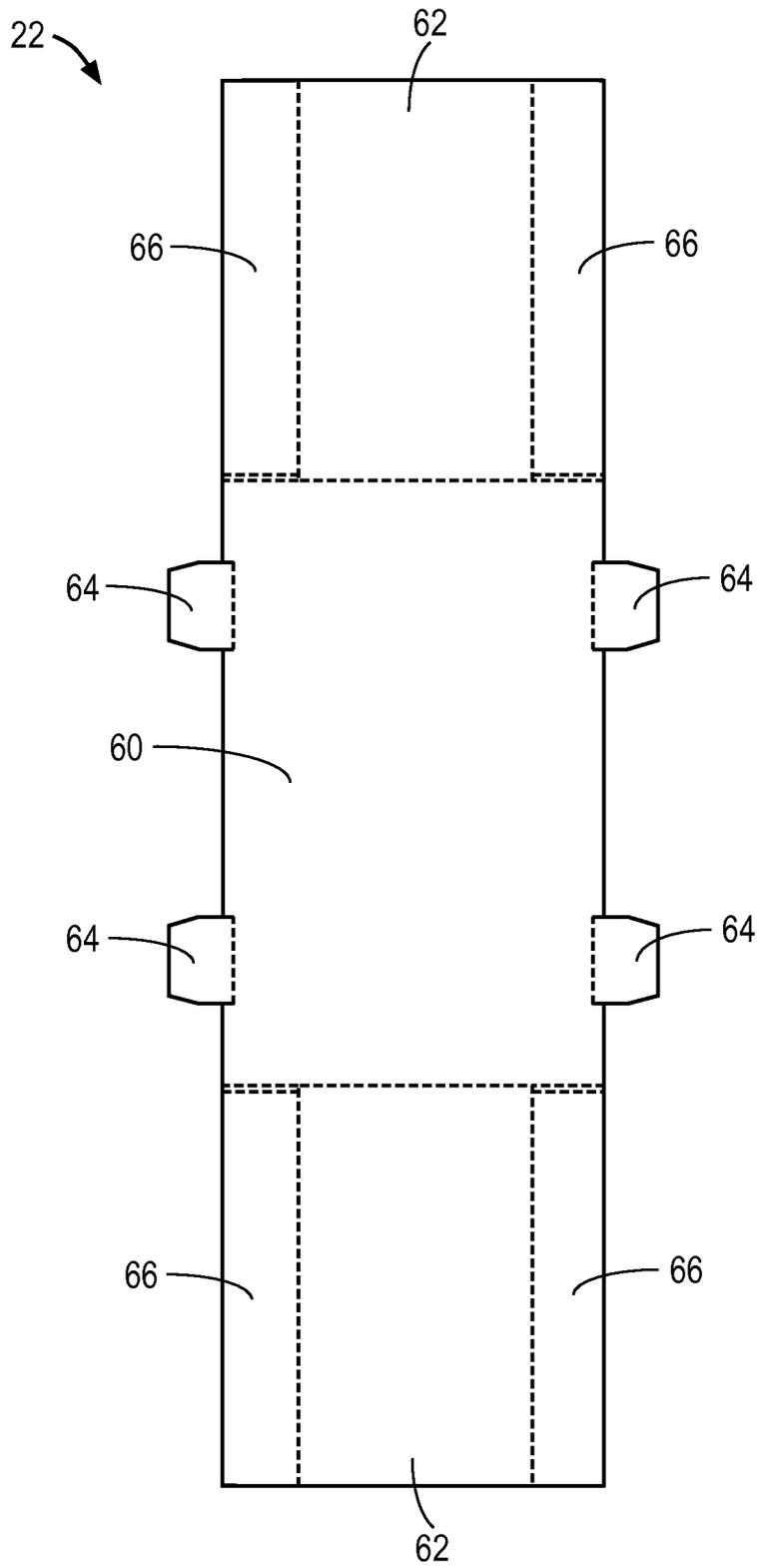


FIG. 4

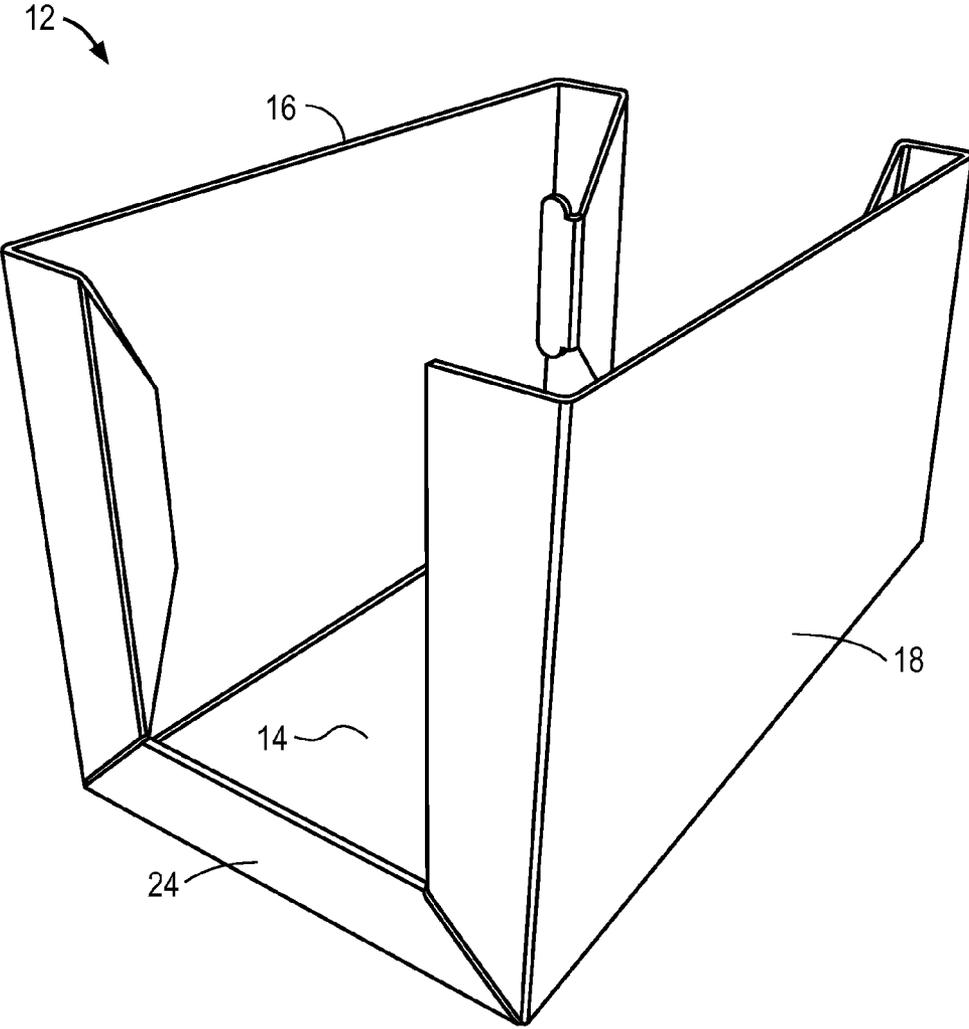


FIG. 5

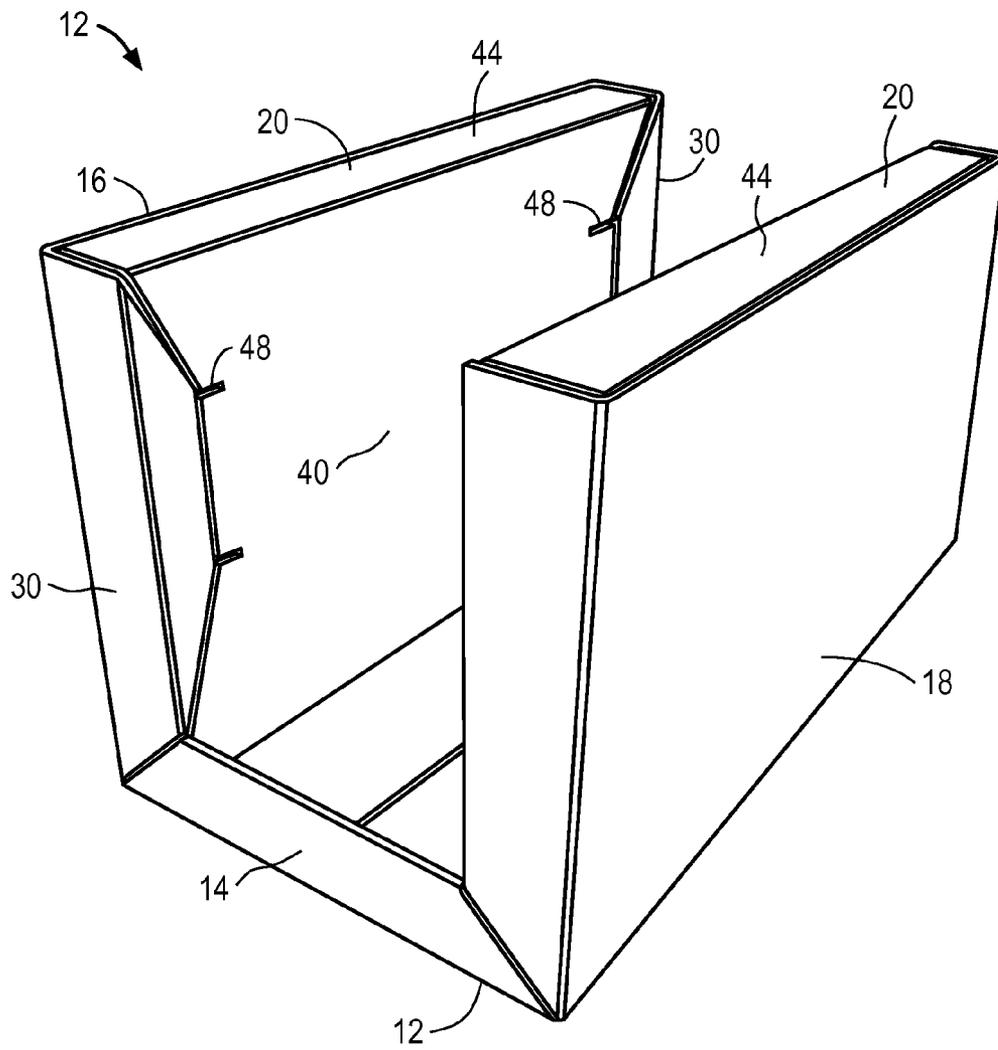


FIG. 6

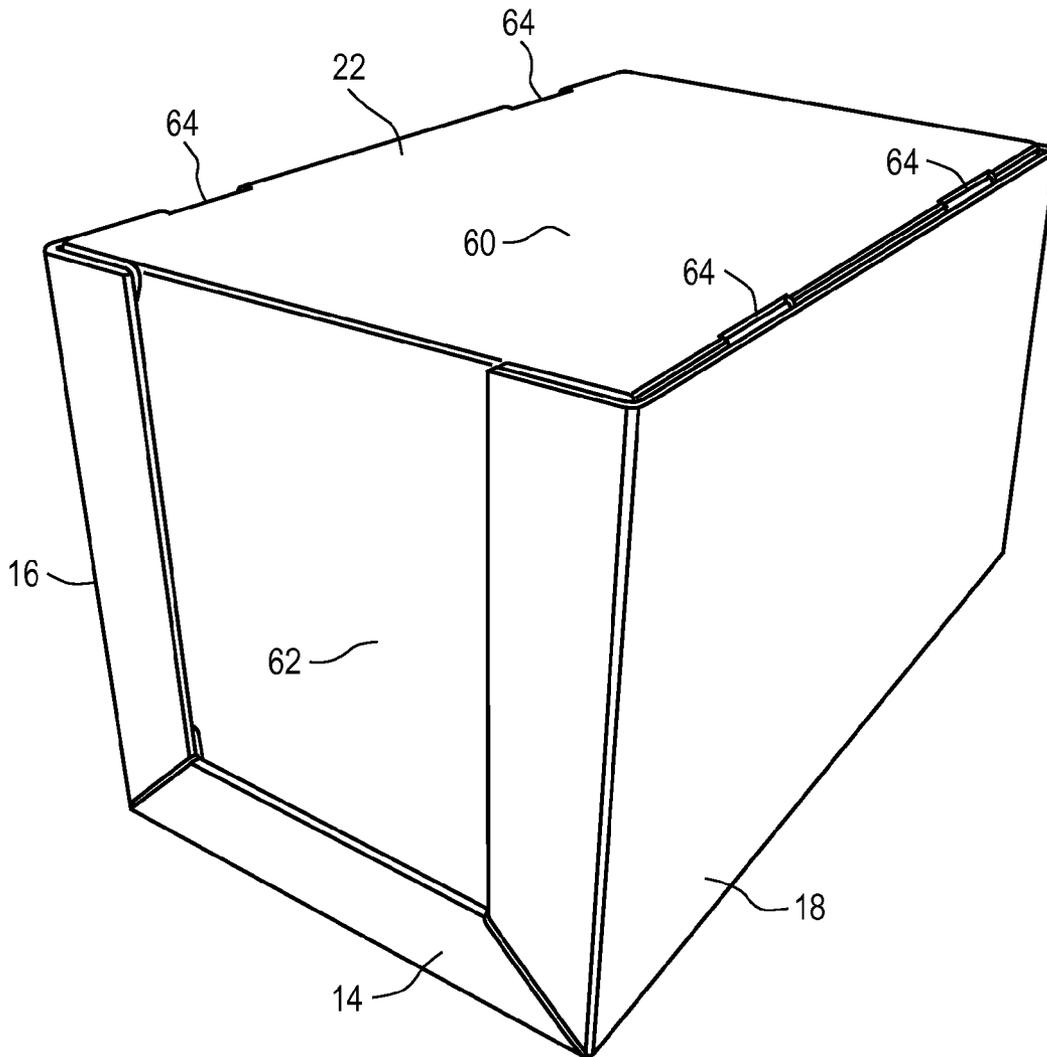


FIG. 7

BOX CONTAINER AND DISPLAY

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This non-provisional patent application claims priority benefit, with regard to all common subject matter, of earlier-filed U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 61/677,979, filed Jul. 31, 2012, and entitled "IMPROVED STACKABLE TRAY." The identified earlier-filed provisional patent application is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety into the present non-provisional application.

FIELD

Embodiments of the present invention relate generally to the field of point of purchase merchandise shipping and display containers. More particularly, embodiments of the present invention relate to a corrugated, paperboard container and display that is manufactured in a fold and glue assembly process and that is traditionally provided to an end user in a collapsed or knockdown configuration for setup.

BACKGROUND

Corrugated containers are made from pieces of flat paperboard stock material that are die cut into shapes that define various panels. The shapes are folded along predefined lines between the panels with at least one overlapping strip or panel that is glued, taped or otherwise affixed to another panel to form an enclosed boundary. The panels are folded and/or glued into place to become the walls of the container. The containers are traditionally provided to product manufacturers and/or retailers in a collapsed or knock-down configuration for storage, handling and shipping. The manufacturer and/or retailers open the knockdown containers and fold appropriately to utilize the assembled container for packing and/or displaying products therein.

The knockdown containers are typically manufactured by feeding flat die cut sheets through a fold-and-glue machine. The fold-and-glue machine applies adhesive and folds over select panels so that the panels are in the knock-down configuration. One common knock-down container is an open-top style box container. An open-top style box container is typically used to ship products to retailers, who can then display the products to consumers at the retailer's point-of-sale location. It is desirable to minimize the time and effort necessary for retailers to assemble a container from its knock-down configuration. Thus, such container suppliers typically attempt to design containers that do not require separate discrete parts such as reinforcing inserts or dividers. However, in circumstances in which heavy products are being displayed in the containers, it is often necessary to utilize separate metal supports and/or corrugated support dividers to handle the heavy load. This adds considerably to the assembly labor as well as material costs for the container. Furthermore, other circumstances may require the containers to transport and secure fragile items. Standard open-top style box containers are generally not appropriate for handling such fragile items because the open-top does not provide the security required for the fragile items.

An example of such an open-top style box container is shown and described in U.S. Pat. No. 7,981,017 (the '017 Patent"), the entire disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference. However, the container disclosed in the '017 Patent is not configured to handle heavy loads or to maintain fragile items therein. Therefore, it would be beneficial to provide a box container that can accommodate heavier prod-

uct loads without requiring additional support members and that can support fragile items safely during transport and display.

SUMMARY

Embodiments of the present invention include a corrugated box container with a main component including a base section and first and second side sections. The box container additionally includes first and second side support components associated with the first and second side sections for reinforcing the first and second side support sections. The box container further includes a cover component that can be engaged with the main component or the first and second side support components, such that the main component and the cover component present a fully enclosed space within the box container.

Embodiments of the present invention additionally include a method for making a corrugated box container, with the method including the initial step of forming a main component that includes a base section opposed on sides by a first side section and a second side section. The next step includes forming fold lines between the first side section and the base section and between the second side section and the base section. The method additionally includes the step of forming side support components that can be associated with each of the first and second side sections of the main component to reinforce the side sections. The method includes the final step of forming a cover component operable to be engaged with the main component or the first and second side support components so as to fully enclose a space within the box container.

Embodiments of the present invention additionally include a method of erecting a corrugated box container, with the method including providing the box container in a knock-down configuration, with the box container having a main component comprising a base section opposed by first and second side sections, first and second side support components, and a cover component. The method includes folding the first and second side sections until the side sections are generally perpendicular with the base section. The method includes the next step of connecting the first and second side support components with the first and second side sections respectively, such that the support components are operable to reinforce the side sections. Finally, the method includes the step of connecting the cover component with the main component or the first and second side support components so as to provide a fully enclosed space within the box container.

This summary is provided to introduce a selection of concepts in a simplified form that are further described below in the detailed description. This summary is not intended to identify key features or essential features of the claimed subject matter, nor is it intended to be used to limit the scope of the claimed subject matter. Other aspects and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from the following detailed description of the embodiments and the accompanying drawing figures.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

Embodiments of the present invention are described in detail below with reference to the attached drawing figures, wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the box container according to embodiments of the present invention, with the box con-

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tainer including a main component, two side support components, and a cover component;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the main component from FIG. 1 in a knockdown configuration;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of one of the side support components from FIG. 1 in a knockdown configuration;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the cover component from FIG. 1 in a knockdown configuration;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the main component from FIGS. 1 and 2 in an erected configuration;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the main component from FIGS. 1, 2, and 5 with two side support components from FIGS. 1, and 3 secured thereto, each in an erected configuration; and

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the main component from FIGS. 1, 2, 5 and 6 with the two side support components from FIGS. 1, 3, and 6 secured thereto, and further including the cover component from FIGS. 1 and 4 secured thereto, all in an erected configuration.

The drawing figures do not limit the present invention to the specific embodiments disclosed and described herein. The drawings are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon clearly illustrating the principles of the invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

The following detailed description of the invention references the accompanying drawings that illustrate specific embodiments in which the invention can be practiced. The embodiments are intended to describe aspects of the invention in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention. Other embodiments can be utilized and changes can be made without departing from the scope of the present invention. The following detailed description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limiting sense. The scope of the present invention is defined only by the appended claims, along with the full scope of equivalents to which such claims are entitled.

In this description, references to “one embodiment,” “an embodiment,” or “embodiments” mean that the feature or features being referred to are included in at least one embodiment of the technology. Separate references to “one embodiment,” “an embodiment,” or “embodiments” in this description do not necessarily refer to the same embodiment and are also not mutually exclusive unless so stated and/or except as will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art from the description. For example, a feature, structure, act, etc. described in one embodiment may also be included in other embodiments, but is not necessarily included. Thus, the present technology can include a variety of combinations and/or integrations of the embodiments described herein.

As shown in FIG. 1, embodiments of the present invention include a box container 10 that includes a main component 12 having a base section 14 opposed by a first side section 16 and a second side section 18; side support components 20 operable engage with the first side section and the second side section of the main component; and a cover component 22 operable engage with portions of the first and second side support sections and to act as a cover for the box container. In some embodiments, the box container 10 is initially produced in a knockdown configuration (i.e., a generally flat, two-dimensional form), such as illustrated in FIGS. 2-4. From the knockdown configuration, the box container 10 is transformed into the erected configuration shown in FIG. 1. When in the erected configuration, the box container 10 is

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operable to securely hold heavy and/or fragile items, and to support such items through transportation and/or shipping. In some embodiments, the box container 10 is formed from one or more sections of corrugated material. In some embodiments, such corrugated material includes paperboard. However, other embodiments provide for the corrugated material to include other similar type materials, such as cardboard, fiberboard, or the like.

Turning to FIG. 2, and as described above, the main component 12 of the box container 10 of embodiments of the present invention has three primary sections, including the base section 14 opposed by first and second side sections 16,18. The main component 12 has thereon fold lines along which in some embodiments can be weakened, or in other embodiments, caused preferentially to fold by any of various means. For example, in some embodiments the corrugated material is compressed along a thin line defining a fold line. In other embodiments the corrugated material is cut part way through along the line, or cut all or part way through the line at spaced intervals. Thus, each of the first and second side sections 16,18 in some embodiments are separated from the base section by fold lines. As such, each of the first and second side sections 16,18 in some embodiments are operable to rotate or fold with respect to the base section 14. For illustrative purposes, the fold lines of the box container 10 are illustrated by single dotted lines in the attached drawings, and are particularly illustrated in FIGS. 2-4.

Remaining with FIG. 2, the base section 14 of the main component 12 generally includes a rectangular or square-shaped central section and two lip sections 24 connected with the rectangular or square-shaped section via fold lines. As such, each of the lip sections 24 in some embodiments is operable to be rotate or fold with respect to the central section. In some embodiments, such fold lines each additionally include one or more slits 26, cutouts, and/or slots extending down a portion thereof. The lip sections 24 in some embodiments include one or more tabs 28. Remaining with FIG. 2, the base section 14 further includes the first and second side sections 16,18, which each include two end portions 30 connected with the side sections via fold lines. As such, each of the end portions 30 in some embodiments are operable to rotate or fold with respect to the side sections 16,18 to which they are attached. The end portions 30 in some embodiments each include main tabs 32 and side tabs 34 that function to secure the box container 10 in an erected position, as will be discussed in more detail below. The tabs 32 in some embodiments include tab fingers 36 that extend from sides of the tabs and that operate to secure the tabs 32 within a corresponding opening (e.g., a cutout), as will be discussed in more detail below.

Turning to FIG. 3, the side support components 20 each include an inner panel 40 and an outer panel 42, with the inner and outer panels separated by a central panel 44 via fold lines. As such, each of the inner and outer panels 40,42 in some embodiments are operable rotate or fold with respect to the central panel 44. In certain embodiments, the inner and outer panels 40,42 have shapes and sizes that generally correspond to the shape and size of the side sections 16,18 of the main component 12. In certain embodiments, the outer panel 42 includes two flange sections 46 that are each operable to fold along fold lines. The inner panel 40 includes two openings 48 in the form of slits or notch-shaped cutouts. In certain embodiments, the inner panel 40 includes a single flange section 50 that extends from a side of a main portion of the inner panel opposite the central panel 44. Further, the central panel 44 includes two openings 52 in the form of slits or notch-shaped cutouts. As will be discussed in more detail

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below, the openings 48 of the inner panel 40 are used in some embodiments for mating with tabs 32 of the main component 12, and the openings 52 of the central panel 44 are used with portions of the cover component 22 so as to secure the box container 10 in an erected configuration.

With reference to FIG. 4, in certain embodiments, the cover component 22 of the box container 10 includes a top section 60 and end sections 62, with the end sections separated from the top section by fold lines. As such, each of the end sections 62 is operable to rotate or fold with respect to the top section 60. In certain embodiments, the top section 60 has a size and a shape that corresponds to the size and shape of the central section of the base section 14 of the main component 12. The top section 60 in some embodiments has four main tabs 64, with two tabs being positioned on each side of the top section. The end sections 62 in some embodiments each include two flange sections 66 positioned on sides of the end sections and separated from main portions of the end sections via fold lines. As such, each of flange sections 66 are operable to rotate or fold with respect to the main portions of the end sections 60. The four main tabs 64 and the flange sections 66 are operable to secure the box container 10 in an erected position, as will be discussed in more detail below.

In operation of embodiments of the present invention, the box container 10 is transformed in a quick and efficient manner from the knockdown configuration of FIGS. 2-4 to the erected configuration of FIG. 1. To begin, and with reference to FIG. 5, the first and second side sections 16,18 of the main component 12 are folded in along their fold lines until the side sections are generally parallel with each other and are generally perpendicular with the base section 14. Next, the lip sections 24 are folded about the fold lines connecting the lip sections with the central section of the base section 14 until the lip sections are orientated generally perpendicularly with the central section. As such, the tabs 28 (not shown in FIG. 5) are capable of being inserted within the slits 26 (not shown in FIG. 5) to secure the lip sections 24 in place. In addition, the side tabs 34 (not shown in FIG. 5) of the end portions 30 (not shown in FIG. 5) of the side sections 16,18 are capable of being inserted between a portion of the lip sections 24 that were folded together, such that the side sections are secured in position that is generally perpendicular to the base section 14. In certain embodiments, the first and second side sections 16,18 are secured via frictional forces imparted between the lip sections 24 and the side tabs 34. In other embodiments, the side tabs 34 are secured to the lip sections 24 via an adhesive, such as glue, tape, or the like. As such, the main component 12 is erected to present a box-shaped container that includes a base and two side sections.

With reference to FIG. 6, in the embodiment shown, the two side support components 20 are secured to the main component 12 to reinforce each of the first and second side sections 16,18. In more detail, the inner and outer panels 40,42 (outer panel not shown in FIG. 6) of each of the side support components 20 are folded about the central panel 44 until the inner and outer panels are generally parallel with each other and perpendicular to the central panel. As such, the outer panel 40 of a first side support component 20 in the embodiment shown is positioned adjacent to an interior-facing surface of the first side section 16 of the main component 12. Similarly, in the embodiment shown, the outer panel 40 of a second side support component 20 is positioned adjacent to an interior-facing surface of the second side section 18 of the main component 12. Next, in the embodiments shown, the end portions 30 of the first and second side sections 16,18 are wrapped around the side support components 20, and each the main tabs 32 (not shown in FIG. 6) of the end portions are

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mated within the openings 48 of the inner panels 40 of the side support components. In certain embodiments, before the main tabs 32 are inserted within the openings 48, the tab fingers 36 (not shown in FIG. 6) are folded against the remaining portions of the main tabs 32. Once the main tabs 32 have been inserted, the tab fingers 36 are capable of unfolding, thus securing the main tabs within the openings 48. As such, the side support components 20 are secured in place to the main component 12 and are operable to reinforce the side sections 16,18 of the main component.

Finally, with reference to FIGS. 1 and 7, in the embodiment shown, the cover component 22 is arranged into position by folding the end sections 62 about the fold lines until the end sections are generally parallel with respect to each other and perpendicular to the top section 60. Next, the flange sections 66 (not shown in FIG. 7) of the end sections are folded about their fold lines until they are generally perpendicular to their respective end section 62. As such, the cover component 22 is capable of being secured to the remaining components of the box container 10, so as to provide a top cover and end covers for securely enclosing a space within the box container. In particular, the end sections 62 are capable of being positioned between the first and second side sections 16,18, such that the flange sections 66 of the end sections are adjacent to the inner panels 40 of the side support components 20 (not shown in FIG. 7). As such, the flange sections 66 are operable to provide frictional support to secure the cover component 22 in place. Further, the four main tabs 64 of the cover component 22 are mated with the openings 52 (not shown in FIGS. 1 and 7) on the central section 44 of each of the side support components 20. Such mating further provides for the cover component 22 to be secured in place, such as illustrated by FIG. 7.

With the box container 10 in an erected configuration as described above, the box container is operable to provide a reinforced, enclosed container that is capable of securely holding fragile items during shipping or transportation. Because the box container 10 includes the side support components 20 and the cover component 22, the box container is reinforced to protect the container, and the items stored therein, from external forces. Furthermore, the side support components 20 and cover component 22 are operable to provide an enclosed area within the box container 10, such that items included within the box container are protected from the elements during shipping or other transportation. Furthermore, because the box container 10 is reinforced and has all sides covered, multiple box containers can be stacked on top of each other to facilitated efficient use of space. Furthermore, once the box container 10 has reached its intended destination, the cover component 22 is removed from the remaining components of the box container, and the remaining components are used to display the items that were enclosed therein. Thus, embodiments of the present invention provide for the box container 10 to be used to securely transport items, and further to display such items after transport.

Although the invention has been described with reference to the embodiments illustrated in the attached drawing figures, it is noted that equivalents may be employed and substitutions made herein without departing from the scope of the invention as recited in the claims.

Having thus described various embodiments of the invention, what is claimed as new and desired to be protected by Letters Patent includes the following:

1. A corrugated box container comprising:
 - a main component including a base section and first and second side sections;

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first and second side support components associated with said first and second side sections and operable to reinforce said first and second side support sections; and a cover component operable to be engaged with said main component or said first and second side support components,

wherein said main component and said cover component are operable to present a fully enclosed space within said box container,

wherein said first and second side support components each include an inner panel and an outer panel separated by a central panel, and

wherein said inner panels of said first and second side support components each include openings, and wherein said first and second side sections include tabs, and further wherein said tabs are operable to engage with said openings so as to secure said first and second side support components with said first and second side sections respectively.

2. The corrugated box container of claim 1, wherein said box container is formed from corrugated paperboard material.

3. The corrugated box container of claim 1, wherein said inner panels of said first and second side support components each include two openings, and wherein said first and second side sections of said main component each include two tabs.

4. The corrugated box container of claim 3, wherein said tabs on said first and second side sections of said main component are positioned on end portions of said side sections, with said end portions extending from sides of said side sections.

5. The corrugated box container of claim 4, wherein when said tabs engage with said openings, said end portions are operable to wrap around a portion of said first and second side support components.

6. A corrugated box container comprising:

a main component including a base section and first and second side sections;

first and second side support components coupled to respective first and second side sections so as to reinforce said first and second side support sections; and a cover component operable to be engaged with said main component or said first and second side support components,

wherein said main component and said cover component are operable to present a fully enclosed space within said box container, and

wherein said first and second side support components each include a central panel, and

wherein said central panels of said first and second side support components each include openings, and wherein said cover component includes tabs operable to engage with said openings so as to secure said cover component to said main component or to said first and second side support components.

7. The corrugated box container of claim 6, wherein each central panel includes two openings and said cover component includes four tabs.

8. A method of making a corrugated box container, comprising:

forming a main component that includes a base section opposed on sides by a first side section and a second side section;

forming fold lines between said first side section and said base section and between said second side section and said base section; and

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forming side support components capable of association with each of said first and second side sections of said main component to reinforce said side sections; and forming a cover component operable to engage with said main component or said first and second side support components so as to fully enclose a space within said box container,

wherein said first and second side support components are formed such that each includes an inner panel and an outer panel separated by a central panel, and

wherein said inner panels of said first and second side support components are each formed with openings, and wherein said first and second side sections are formed with tabs, and further wherein said tabs are operable to engage with said openings so as to secure said first and second side support components with said first and second side sections respectively.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein said box container is formed from corrugated paperboard material.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein said inner panels of said first and second side support components are formed with two openings, and said first and second side sections of said main component are formed with two tabs.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said tabs of said first and second side sections of said main component are formed on end portions of said side sections, with end portions extending from sides of the side sections.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said tabs are formed to engage with said the openings, and said end portions are formed to wrap around sides of said first and second side support components.

13. A method of making a corrugated box container, comprising:

forming a main component that includes a base section opposed on sides by a first side section and a second side section;

forming fold lines between said first side section and said base section and between said second side section and said base section;

forming first and second side support components; coupling said first and second side support components to respective first and second side sections so as to reinforce said side sections; and

forming a cover component operable to engage with said main component or said first and second side support components so as to enclose a space within said box container,

wherein said first and second side support components each include a central panel, and

wherein said central panels of said first and second side support components are formed with openings, and wherein said cover components are formed with tabs operable to engage with said openings so as to secure said cover component to said main component or to said first and second side support components.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein each central panel is formed with two openings and said cover component is formed with four tabs.

15. A method of erecting a corrugated box container, comprising:

providing said box container in a knockdown configuration,

wherein said box container includes a main component having a base section opposed by first and second side sections, first and second side support components, and a cover component;

folding said first and second side sections until said side sections are generally perpendicular with said base section;

connecting said first and second side support components with said first and second side sections respectively, 5 such that said support components are operable to reinforce said side sections;

connecting said cover component with said main component or with said first and second side support components so as to provide a fully enclosed space within said 10 box container,

wherein said first and second side support components are formed such that each includes an inner panel and an outer panel separated by a central panel, and

wherein said inner panels of said first and second side 15 support components are each formed with openings, and wherein said first and second side sections are formed with tabs, and further wherein said tabs are operable to engage with said openings so as to secure said first and second side support components with said first and second 20 side sections respectively.

16. The method of claim **15**, wherein said box container is formed from corrugated paperboard material.

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